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From: Nelia Hoard <nhoard@thegreenschool.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 2:59 PM
To: House Education Committee
Subject: Opposition to H7415

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Testimony for the House Education Committee on H7415

Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

My name is Nelia Hoard, I live in Hopkinton and I am the School Counselor at The Greene School. I am here to support our school's approved plan to add middle grades. This bill would undo decisions already made by the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education.

As a school counselor, I believe it is important to expand our school so that all middle schoolers have equal opportunities. If we can start working with them in grades 6-8, we can provide them with more support through learning plans, career exploration, and social-emotional growth. This extra time would help them build stronger study and organizational skills, along with key executive functioning strategies, before high school. They would start high school better prepared and more confident.

We also have students, families, and community members who are counting on this expansion. Freezing it now, after it was approved, deprives a school that did everything right of an opportunity. By stopping our growth, H7415 ignores the voices of thousands of families who want specific education options for their children's unique needs.

After nine years working in traditional public schools, I decided to make a change. Joining a Charter School has confirmed that I made the right choice. Here, our unique, hands-on learning environment helps students thrive. If we are not allowed to expand, students will miss out on an important opportunity to grow during a critical time in their lives. Allowing TGS to serve middle grades is not just about expanding a school. It is an investment in students' futures, helping them succeed in school, in their communities, and in their careers.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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Nelia Hoard ([she/her](#))

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